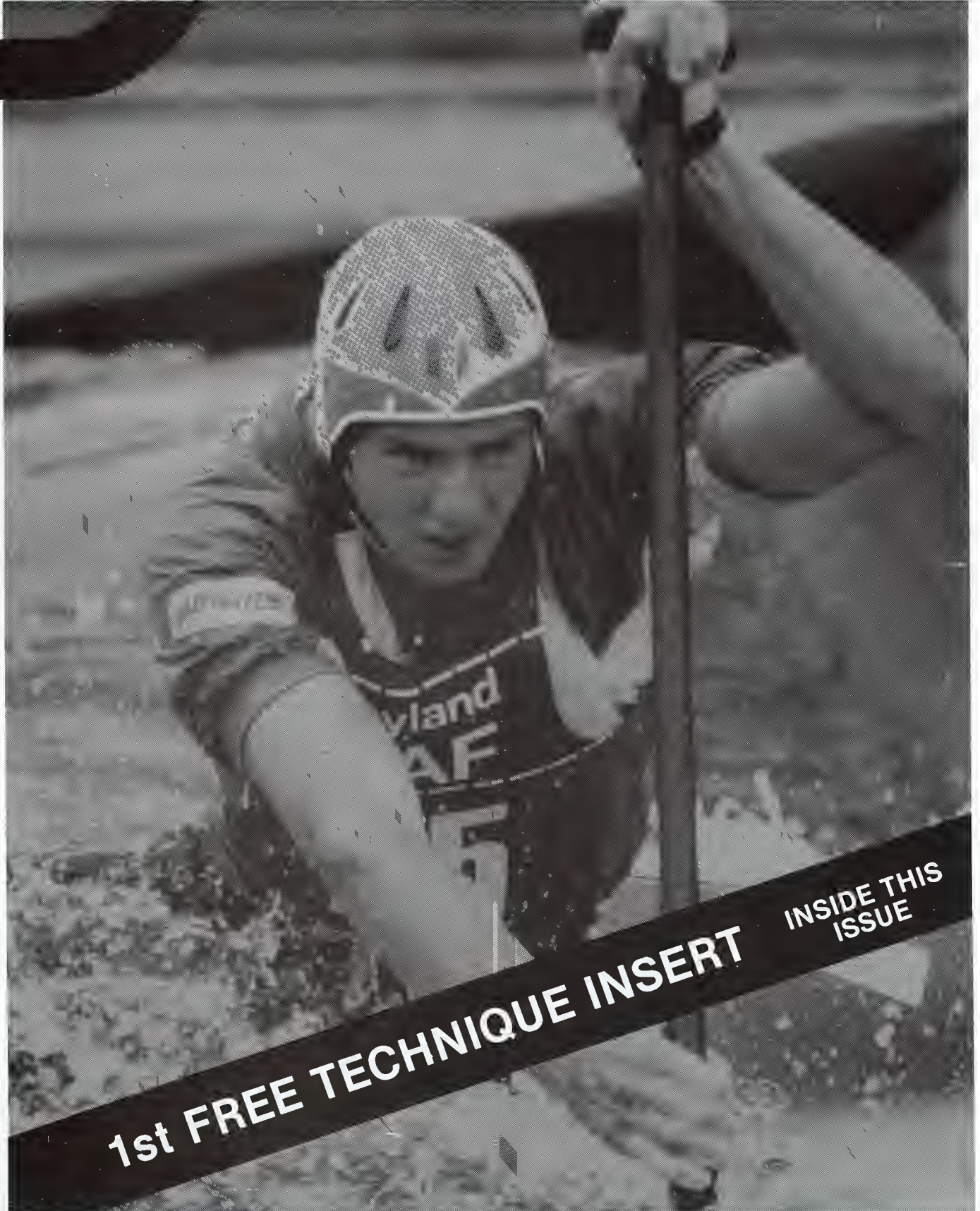


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CANOE Slalom

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MAGAZINE



1st FREE TECHNIQUE INSERT

INSIDE THIS
ISSUE

NOVICES START HERE — Alan Edge



LEN SHACKLETON
Photo: Pete Astles

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CANOE slalom

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LARA TIPPER
Photo: Pete Astles

EDITORIAL

UNDER 16 SELECTION

A breath of fresh air is blowing through the organising of our coaching and I strongly suspect that we've got our hard-working Coach Alan Edge to thank for it. As the head of the team organising slalom coaching and Team training an ever improving and professional organisation is emerging under his guidance.

We were one of the first to raise a loud voice of protest over previous U16 selection and we would like to be the first to applaud the new ideas this year. It is going to mean a lot of extra work for team management but it gives far more youngsters the chance to prove themselves even if their lack of experience shows up at the selection events. Congratulations!

AGGRO AT HP

Letters this month include two versions of a common scenario between 'plastic boats' and slalomists at Holme Pierrepont. Sitting in a stopper for a long period is rather like leaving your car in the middle of a one way street; either is annoying if someone else wishes to proceed. However, sitting in a stopper is fun (or so I'm informed!) and people pay to use the course to have fun. They also pay to train on it. As the course becomes more popular in the warmer weather the problem gets worse. Since it has opened the slalom course seems to have lacked understanding, co-ordination or control from management and solutions seemed far away. More than a glimmer of hope is dawning with a new Director of the Centre who appears to be gaining control and seeking understanding; he also seems willing to be flexible. We wish him luck, as more than the current problem requires resolving.

If the solution to the current problem is to have separate times for different users so be it; if the paddlers want it and if it is cost effective for the Centre we may get it.

WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS?

1989 WORLD CUP COMPETITION PROGRAMME

RACE 1 — July 01
Gull River, Ontario, Canada.

RACE 2 — July 04
South Bend, Indiana, U.S.A.

RACE 3 — July 08/09
Wausau, Wisconsin, U.S.A.

RACE 4 — August 05/06
Bourg St. Maurice, France

RACE 5 — August 12
Mezzana, Val di Sole, Italy

RACE 6 — August 15
Augsburg, West Germany

RACE 7 — August 19/20
Tacen, Yugoslavia

**Urgently required — Volunteer for
publicity and Market of Slalom Magazine.
Please contact Sue Wharton, 1 Barnacre
View, High Street, Garstang, Preston.**



RUSS SMITH
Photo: Pete Astles

CURRENT AFFAIRS

STOP PRESS

For years 'Slalom Magazine' has had its moles in the top echelons of the Executive but often the most exciting thing to happen was that there was still someone awake at the end of a marathon 8 or 12 hour meeting. However, it is reliably reported that the last meeting was finished by lunch time and everyone was awake at the end of it.

Welsh Access Worries

Concern is being felt by many over access to the Dee and the Tryweryn as fishing and land-owning interests seem to be becoming more intransigent. Certainly certain paddlers caused trouble on the Mike Jones Weekend but problems run deeper than that. Hopefully current attempts to resolve matters will achieve success.

SCORING SYSTEM

Overall World Cup rankings will be determined on the basis of points scored at four races PLUS the final. No double points will be scored at the final in 1989. The points system will remain the same for 1989, 25 for a win 20 for second, 15 for third, 12 for fourth 11 for fifth etc down to 15th place.

ENTRIES

An increase in the number of countries participating in World Cup races is expected for 1989. In 1988 20 nations were represented and this is expected to rise to 25 with the addition of the Soviet Union, Spain, Japan, Norway and possible Senegal. A maximum of four boats per nation may be entered in each category.

UNDER 17 & U18 SELECTION

The Junior Team for the Pre-Worlds at Grison in Switzerland and the U17 Team for the Czechoslovakia Tour will be made based on the results of:—

Premier event on Saturday 25th March at Grandtully and

Premier event on Saturday 8th April at HP.

Up to 6 boats in each class (max 3 U18) will be selected subject to an appropriate international standard being reached.

UNDER 16 SELECTION

The U16 Squad selection will be based on the following two events:—

Div. 1 on Sunday the 2nd April at Grandtully and Div. 1 on Sunday 16th April at the Tryweryn.

Primarily on these results 30-40 paddlers will be selected for a training day at Cardington on 30th April when further selection will provide the training squad for the UK U16 training camp.

All Div. 1 and Prem. (plus Canadian Div. 2) paddlers wishing to be considered for selection must register by 17th March 1989, using the appropriate form, obtainable from Sue Wharton enclosing an SAE and the £10 registration fee (£5 ICF requirement and £5 donation to team funds).

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

1. The Russians are coming! The Soviet Union plan to send 7 paddlers to the USA next year to compete in the world championships followed by World Cup races at the Gull in Canada and South Bend and Wausau in the States. Our man in Moscow reports that the Soviets are training hard and have gone to a warm weather training site in the south of their country. Next Spring they plan to race in Poland and Czechoslovakia. The decision by the Soviets to participate in international competition can be seen as a significant one, their last appearance was at Augsburg in 1972. The newly acquired Olympic status for slalom has obviously had an effect and one hopes that the presence of the Soviet Union will encourage other East Bloc nations to have a go.

2. Elsewhere the Olympics have a major impact on the budgets of international teams. In the USA the Olympic Committee has made \$200,000 available to the slalom team which includes the full time employment of Bill Endicott as team coach. Bill has been doing the job full time for ten years so the only difference is that he will now get a cheque to take to the bank.

3. The Samba beat beckons paddlers from the USA, Austria, Great Britain and France, not to mention Brazil and Argentina. The first Brazilian international slalom will take place in January at Nova Friburgo near Rio de Janeiro. The Brazilians have worked hard to develop slalom in their country since visiting the USA in the summer of 1988 to take part in the World Cup.

RAT-BITE FEVER

Rat-bite fever is what you get if the wretched animal bites you. It if only pees on you or into the water you canoe on (or swim in!) you know by now that Weils Disease can be the result.

Despite the fact that the Holm Pierrepont users group spent a good chunk of their last meeting talking about it, it is not the second coming of the plague. So what are your chances of catching it? According to one of the world's authorities on the disease, Doctor Waitkins of the Public Health Laboratory in Hereford, "about the same as contracting Legionaires Disease".

However, the relative rareness of the disease in this country doesn't mean that it is not very serious if you do get it. Out of the 6356 who came down with it after the Brazilian mudslides last year over 3000 died and without treatment your chances of survival are just the same — 50/50.

Hospital treatment without early diagnosis in this country increases the odds — but not by much. Out of around 132 cases in this country last year 19 died; a death rate of 1 in 7. 3 or 4 were canoeists but not necessarily slalomists, so how to increase your odds?

Early diagnosis is an important factor so be aware of the symptoms, these are as follows:—

Flu-like symptoms with muscle pains,
COMBINED WITH:-

Very severe headaches AND

Red eyes (conjunctivitis)

A simple and inexpensive test known as an ELISA TEST is available at most main hospitals and the results can be known in hours. This test can be made 5 or 6 days after contracting the disease.

Take your BCU warning card to the doctors with you if you are ill and if you have all the symptoms.

Keep all open cuts well covered with water-proof plasters while on the water.

Be aware that there is likely to be a greater chance of the disease when heavy rain follows a period of drought.

Try and keep ABOVE the water!

Although Weils Disease is on the increase so is

the use of water ways for recreational purposes. So be aware of it rather than wary; the odds against catching it at all are pretty good!

NEW RULES RULE, OK?

As many of us are just getting to grips with the old new rules they (the ICF) have pulled the rug from under us once again and introduced new simplified rules based on the old new rules which were based on the old modified rules (or was that the modified old rules?)

Anyway I've had them explained to me in words of one syllable so I'll try and pass on the good news in the same way.

Basically the 'pre-touch' rule that it took us a year to understand (and most judges never did) has been scrapped and now ALL GATES AHEAD OF US ARE LIVE and if we hit one WE HAVE JUST FINISHED ALL THE GATES BEFORE IT even if we haven't gone through them.

An example: You clear gate 1 on a weir slalom and on the way to gate 2 you drop low and hit the outside of gate 10. You have just got a 50 on gates 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and (so far) a 5 on 10.

"Foul!" I hear you cry (actually you said something quite unprintable) "How come?" It all results from the definition of starting and finishing gates.

A gate is live until you

- a) cross ANY following gate line or
- b) hit ANY following gate or
- c) cross the finish line.

It is then finished and dead and no further penalties can be scored on it.

A gate is started when you

- d) cross its gate line or
- e) HIT IT.

So in the above example by hitting gate 10 you finish gate 1 [see b) above] AND FOR THE SAME REASON FINISH 2-9 AS WELL. You got a five on 10 for hitting it and NONE OF THE PENALTIES CAN BE REDUCED BY DOING THE GATES AGAIN.

I wouldn't mind betting that most paddlers and judges and quite a few chairmen of the jury won't know this rule at the beginning of the season but make sure that YOU are not one of the ones caught.



JANEZ SCHOK
Photo: Pete Astles

OLYMPIC BID

Liz Sharman

At the end of the '87 Slalom season, with another World title under her belt, the expected euphoria surprisingly was missing. The prospect of the 1988 Europa Cup, having won it twice before, did little to kindle my enthusiasm.

About this time the Olympic bandwagon had begun to roll and a seed of a plan started to germinate. For many years I had resented that I was never to be an Olympic athlete in slalom canoeing at least not before I was an old age pensioner.

When in doubt they say 'consult your coaches'. This I did and they agreed a change of direction might, besides helping me achieve a long held ambition, also stimulate my enthusiasm.

A correctly constructed slalom training programme meant that I was as fit as anybody and all it seemed I needed to do was paddle quickly in a straight line for about two minutes to become an Olympic Sprint Paddler, well that's more or less what John Handyside led me to believe. It didn't sound too difficult!

I quickly found myself a local sprint coach, Jonathan Gloyn-Wates, and a sprint boat courtesy of Arrowcraft. The boat was great, but the same could not be said of my initial tentative attempts. I soon found that letting go of my paddle to scratch my nose mid-session was not a good idea, finding yourself the wrong way up in a sprint boat only leads to swimming practice -they do not roll too well.

My first Regatta, wearing my new Nottingham colours, was in Autumn 1987. I came second in Div. A; perhaps John Handyside's comments were correct; brute force and ignorance 'ruled OK'.

How wrong I found my assumptions to be. The coaches tore my slalom stroke to pieces and over a period of six months began to mold a technique which I hoped was recognisable as a sprint stroke. A view not held by everybody in the sprinting fraternity.

My end of '87 season results gained me entry to the Olympic Training Squad. From being 'top dog' in slalom to 'bottom of the rung' in sprint was a sobering experience, but as predicted by my slalom coaches it did fire my enthusiasm and fuel my aggression.

To cut a long story short, after a lot of very hard work and help by numerous people, I made the Olympic team and was on my way to Korea; my aims achieved but harbouring the knowledge that I had no chance of a medal, a very strange feeling after ten years of slalom success.

What did I gain?—

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- A greater awareness of another canoe discipline.

What did I lose —

Nine months of slalom training, although winning the Pre-Worlds and the first leg of the Europa Cup, this lack of training eventually caught up with me at the Nottingham final, three weeks prior to leaving for Korea.

However, I do not see this as a loss, but more a bonus as the poor result in the Europa Cup has only served to stimulate my enthusiasm for the '89 Worlds.

With slalom canoeing now confirmed as being included in the next Olympics all aspiring slalomists have something to aim for. There are few words that describe the feeling of being part of the Olympic family and I recommend this experience to all of you.

Liz Sharman.

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IAN RASPIN — LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Photo: Pete Astles

REGIONAL ROUNDUP

All regional reps are contacted before each issue. IF they choose to send no information, or are doing nothing, then nothing can be published.

WEST MIDLAND SCENE

This years Regional Slalom Series, promises to be another very good way of introducing new paddlers into slalom canoeing.

Four events are planned this year, the first three of which will be used for selection of the two best clubs in this region, who will go forward to compete in the National Club Championships.

All clubs wishing to be considered for this selection should contact me, prior to the first event.

The dates for these Regional Slalom Series is as follows:-

30th April, 1989

Martley, Nr. Worcester.

Organised by Kinver Canoe Club.

18th June, 1989

Stone, Nr. Stafford.

Organised by Stafford & Stone Canoe Club.

9th July, 1989

Ironbridge, Nr. Telford.

Organised by Dudley Canoe Club.

3rd September, 1989

Stratford-upon-Avon.

Organised by Stratford-upon-Avon Kayakists.

Our grateful thanks goes out to these clubs, who take the time and effort into running these slaloms, to try to introduce new paddlers to our sport.

We should also like to take this opportunity to thank most sincerely our friend Martyn Gibbons, who this season has decided to stand down from his position as our Regional Representative, for all his good work over the last two years in this post. With Martyns guidance the Region has won the Individual and the Team Trophies at the Inter-Regional Championships in 1987 and 1988.

Sandra Holden

EASTERN REGION SLALOM

The 1988 Season was represented by paddlers from all Divisions at Slaloms throughout the country. We were also very strong in Premier and Division 1, with congratulations to Justin Barnes of Viking Kayak Club who became Division 1 champion. There were also some outstanding results from Leo Hoare and Alan Heaume, who were also promoted to Premier Division.

The Eastern Region Slalom Team ran a Division 3 event at Cardington in March, but unfortunately it was very poorly attended. Let's hope with the new improvements we will get the competitors to come back to Cardington.

As in previous years we took a team abroad for a Class C International; unfortunately the date for the Efteling event was moved by one week, and therefore we could only attend the event in Belgium at a town called Eupen. The region had some outstanding results, coming away with some 21 medals in all classes, youths, seniors and team events. Although we were only a region we were presented with the Nations Medal. We will be taking another team abroad during the 1989 season.

On the International scene we must congratulate Lara Tipper, although not now living in the region, she still keeps her affiliation with the Eastern Region and this year won the silver medal in the World Junior Championships in Spain. Also to Liz Sharman for her results in the Pre-Worlds in the U.S.A.

In the National Inter-Regional Club event at Holme Pierrepont, the region was represented by Viking K.C., Hemel Hemstead C.C. and Cambridge C.C., who finished 9th, 14th and 15th respectively. Other good news about this event is that the British Canoe Union Slalom Executive has agreed to move this prestigious event back to Cardington for 1989.

At the Inter-Regional event held in Llangollen we had a full team and had one of the best results since the event was started, finishing third in the team events and second in the individual events, with the senior and youth men gaining bronze medals and an outstanding result by Alison Runnegar, who won the silver medal. I must thank Andy Rance for his coaching at this event, which I know was appreciated by all the competitors.

A very successful Pool Slalom was held at Luton Swimming Pool and as usual was enjoyed by all, and the next event will be on the 20th January 1990.

Thanks to team coaches, Dave Brown and Andy Rance, and to Mike Carter as my Assistant.

Jim Croft, Eastern Regional Slalom Rep.

EFTELING & EUPEN

As in the past years, a team representing the Eastern Region will be attending the International Slalom at Efteling in Holland on the 29th April 1989 and it is hoped to attend a second event at Eupen in Belgium on Sunday 30th April 1989.

Selection Policy

The selection of the team for Efteling will be decided from the Serpent's Tail Premier on March 11/12th and the Hambleden Division 1 March 18/19th if you are not in the appropriate Divisions, you must enter the Judges Events.

The best results from these events will be looked at and possible the Team will consist of six K1 Men, three K1 Ladies, and 3 Canadin boats.

The Selection Committee, whose decision shall be final is Jim Croft, Team Manager, Mike Carter, Assistant Manager and Dave Brown, Team Coach.

If you wish to be considered, you should be in Premier or Division 1 although, depending upon your ability, Division 2 might be considered. You should send 2 stamped addressed envelopes to Jim Croft no later than March 1st 1989.

All of those selected will be expected to help and take part in the Division 3 Event at Cardington April 8/9 although Premier Paddlers will be allowed to attend the Holme Pierrepont on Saturday the 8th April.

NB

Should the Serpent's Tail Event be cancelled then the alternative venue will be used, watch canoeing press for details.

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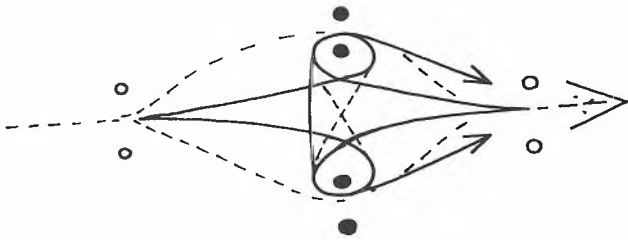
NOVICES START HERE - Alan Edge

GUIDELINES FOR LEARNING BASIC SLALOM TECHNIQUE

by Alan Edge - National Slalom Coach

— To start slalom training you do not need an elaborate training site with a full course of gates. Basic technique can be developed on any piece of flat water where you can hang gates. All you need are 4 gates hung in a diamond formation with the wires about 2-3 boat lengths apart. (Fig. 1)

— Training gates should be easily adjustable for height and position from the water and are usually hung on wire, terylene or polypropylene baler twine.



(Fig. 1)

Here are some useful tips on how to learn and develop your slalom technique. Remember the diagrams are only basic models that provide a correct sequence of strokes to WORK FROM. They give you a starting point to help you tackle the most typical slalom situations.

1. It is a good idea to **practise the sequence of strokes away from the gate to start with**. This will help you with the rhythm of the strokes and may highlight any problems with individual strokes. If this is the case always refer back to the basic stroke section and practise the stroke separately.
2. **Gate technique needs to be practised slowly to start with** and then gradually picking up the speed once the basic pattern is correct. Do not get bogged down taking too many times until the sequence has been mastered.
3. **Always begin new techniques on flat water**. However it must not be forgotten that slalom is a whitewater sport and every effort should be made to transfer these skills onto moving water as soon as is possible.
4. **Do not learn new techniques when you are tired or in an exhausted state**. You might wish

to put them under realistic slalom pressure but **ONLY** when you have mastered them.

5. **Always go right through the sequence once you have started it**. Do not keep stopping every time you make a mistake or you will find it difficult to learn the pattern and rhythm.

6. **It is very useful to give yourself visible cues or targets to aim at**. These are marked * on the model diagrams. They can be trees, rocks or even waves. They might even just be a **mental marker** like '3 feet from bank pole' or '6 inches from entry pole' etc. They will help you develop **CONSISTENCY** of repetition and are invaluable in **PLANNING** the course.

The most effective method of teaching the correct boat position is the POCKET principle. The pocket can be defined as 'the area of water that you would like to do the gate from'. It follows therefore that every gate on a slalom course will have such a pocket and that it should be identified during course preparation.

These points have been concerned with helping you learn the **HOW of slalom technique**

Once you have mastered the basic pattern of strokes you can start to tackle the **WHEN to use each technique**

— It is vital to understand **WHEN** a particular stroke or boat position must be used. You have got to learn to recognise situations so that you can decide for yourself which technique to use. In the lower divisions 'free practice' allows this to be done by trial and error. However as you move up the divisions this is less and less possible and you have got to develop the skills of visual preparation from the bank.

— **As already mentioned the models are not always used in their basic form. The following factors affect the choice of model or any adaptations that you might make:—**

FACTORS AFFECTING YOUR CHOICE OF MODEL.

a) **ENTRY and EXIT GATES**. The position of the gates **BEFORE** and **AFTER** greatly affects which technique will be used. Always look at the gates as part of a sequence or pattern not just as individual problems. In training keep changing the positions of the entry and exit gates so that you learn to **RECOGNISE** which technique is best without resorting to trial and error.

b) **GATELINE CONDITIONS OR RESTRICTIONS.** Each gate has its own particular problem. Are there boils or current on the gateline? How deep is it? How close is the bank? How high are the poles? These all affect the choice of technique to be used.

c) **YOUR OWN PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS.** Is it gate number 3 or 23? Will you have enough energy left to do the move you have chosen? Only you know your physical limitation and they must be taken into account in the choice of technique.

Some General Points:—

i) **Remember that ultimately the position of the boat is more crucial than the actual strokes used.** Different strokes can be used to achieve the correct position and/or fastest time. For instance if your first attempt at a sweep stroke did not have the desired effect, **DO ANOTHER STROKE** and then rejoin the sequence.

— In this way, a breakout may need 2 initiation sweep strokes or 2 Bow Rudders (double-pump) to best cope with the conditions affecting it. Only you can make that decision and it may have to be taken on the spur of the moment as conditions dictate.

ii) **Try to see each move in your 'minds-eye' BEFORE you do it.** Start to see yourself going through the gates as you look at them. Eventually you will be able to do it without looking at the gates. **This is called mental rehearsal and helps you make a PLAN. The POCKET mentioned earlier should always be in your plan.**

iii) **Be meticulous about penalties, especially those that are repeated.** Try to be certain about why they happened, BEFORE you have another attempt.

The following section lists some common faults in slalom technique and provides some reasons as to what might be causing them.

IDENTIFYING FAULTS IN CANOE SLALOM TECHNIQUE

The following pointers may help you to identify faults either from the bank or the boat. They may also be useful if you have access to video —

1. **Does the boat slow down?** Does it need to? Is the boat too close to the poles? Is there a lack of acceleration? **A WIDER ENTRY LINE OFTEN LEADS TO A TIGHTER, FASTER EXIT FROM THE GATE.**

2. Is there too much **boat lean or excessive rocking** on the 'catch' phase of each stroke? **POSSIBLE CAUSES ARE TOO MUCH EFFORT AND LEAN INTO THE STROKE OR PADDLE LENGTH TOO SHORT.**

3. **Are the exits from the gates tight enough?** Does over-rotation occur between stagger gates? **CAN THE BOAT BE TRAVELLING IN A STRAIGHTER LINE TOWARDS THE FINISH?**

4. **Has it been decided in advance what to aim at on the approach to a gate or sequence?** This is called a **TARGET OR CUE** and helps improve concentration and consistency. Were you in the correct **POCKET?**

5. **What is the PATH OF THE BOWS?** What height are they? Are they safe? The majority of penalties are caused by the front of the boat.

6. Stroke length. **Is it too long or too short?** Where does the paddle enter the water? **TAPE ON THE DECK IS A USEFUL WAY TO CORRECT THIS PROBLEM.**

7. **Is a stroke positive or negative?** Does it **PUSH, PULL, STEER** or **SLOW** the boat? **EACH STROKE MUST HAVE A PURPOSE.**

8. Does the paddling show a **LACK OF RHYTHM?** **Is it leading to sloppy inconsistent technique?**

9. Is there a lack of confidence? **IS A STROKE BEING LEANT ON INSTEAD OF PULLED ON?** **Can a pushing, pulling or steering stroke be used for support so as to maintain momentum?**

10. **Is the SAFETY MARGIN acceptable?** Remember 'Just touched a pole' is as costly as 'Just got my head in the gate'!

— **It is important to focus on things done well. If there was no definite plan then they may not be repeatable. A major part of being skilful is the understanding of why something works. Only with this understanding can skilful techniques become consistently repeatable.**

Always ask yourself the question — **Was it the WRONG CHOICE OF MOVE OR STROKE? OR WAS IT THE RIGHT CHOICE DONE INCORRECTLY?**

PADDLE ALL YEAR ROUND

— Bill Endicot

Paddling all year round greatly enhances someones chances of getting good in C1 — or in any other canoeing/kayaking event for that matter, flatwater or whitewater. Years ago, people told me that it was not good to paddle all year round because athletes would “burn out” by the spring and summer. Better to alternative types of exercise, the theory went, to give the body and mind a bit of rest.

I think this theory originated in places where it was too cold to paddle outdoors in the winter. But a practice that started from necessity then took on some rationalization, in my opinion, the rationalization being that it was actually better not to paddle during the winter anyway. Since the Europeans dominated the sport at that time and they were the ones exposing this point of view, other people just followed that lead.

In America no one really questioned this until the mid-1970's and then it was only in Maryland where we had the David Taylor Model Basin, a huge one kilometer long indoor pool in which to work. We found doing this was simply more fun than running or lifting weights. For many years we did not go outside at all from December to March. We simply paddled in the Model Basin doing both flatwater gates and various types of sprints. Gradually, however, we saw that being outside in warm weather and being on whitewater was even better and we tried to find places at least in the winters before a World Championship.

Now we seldom do gates in the Model Basin, preferring instead to do only 50 - 500 meter sprints and continuous distance instead. These we do at 7 p.m. We do the gateway outside on the Feeder Canal at 7 a.m. The recent invention of “dry suits” has made this even more possible. In World Championship years we go to places like southern California, or Costa Rica for a month or two at a time.

By way of interest, from my limited involvement in flatwater sprint, I think the idea of paddling all year round has been widely accepted only in the last several years, due largely to the success of the New Zealanders, who have won many World and Olympic medals and with whom many foreigners now train. Until fairly recently a lot of top flatwater paddlers advocated running, cross-country skiing, and weight training during the winter. But in 1986 Britain's Jeremy West shocked the world when he won both the K1 500 metres and 1000 metres in the 1986 World Championships after having trained in New Zealand all winter (and being one of the first people to switch over to the wing paddle).

The following are what I feel were the advantages of paddling all year round:

- Physically, it stimulates the paddling muscles better than anything else. The planes of movement in paddling and the speeds of movement and force patterns are quite unlike standard weight training, especially in C1 slalom.
- There is more specific technique training. Slalom, and particularly C1, is a highly technical sport and it is necessary constantly to refine the skills.
- It is a lot more fun than being in the weight room. This pre-supposes that you can be paddling where it is warm enough to be on whitewater.

Here are some things to pay attention to when paddling all year round:

- Introduce a lot of variety in the types of paddling — different length courses, in gates or on the river, timed gate work or un-timed gateway.
- Don't do too much lactic work. Lactic work is what can burn you out, so you want to limit that a bit during the fall and winter. As a result, we tend to do 60-90 second courses only once a week or so up to February and after that we pick it up more and more during the season.
- Keep it fun. We try to have “Feeder Cup” races, in which everyone has to paddle a class different from the one he normally trains in; or we have relay races instead of normal sprints; or things like the “beer slalom”, in which you have to drink a glass of beer in every upstream (non-drinkers pour it over their head), the “Candy Cane” slalom, where the prizes are Christmas candy, and the Halloween slalom where paddlers wear funny costumes. Have some casual get-togethers off the water, too, to build friendship among the athletes apart from the competitive arena.
- Do exercise out of the boat, if you want to — but I don't think it's strictly necessary if you paddle with a group. This is because when you are working alone it is usually harder to motivate yourself to work at high enough intensity which is required for optimal progress. As a result, people who work alone generally wind up substituting volume for intensity and when you are doing this, it helps to have a lot of variety in the schedule, and out-of-the-boat exercises can be good. By way of example, we do high intensity power training via very short slalom courses against time and penalties and

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BACKROOM BOYS

GEORGE RADFORD

George Radford is not only the husband and personal coach of Liz Sharman he is a Senior Coach to the British Team with a particular interest in the Canadian paddlers.

For fifteen years or so George's sport was Judo. Then a move to Bury St. Edmonds, the loneliness of life in digs and a build up of injuries encouraged him to look for another sport. He liked water and canoeing seemed a bit of self indulgence and a means of meeting other people — his future wife for example!

He joined Bury St. Edmonds Canoe Club and began canoeing in 1970. George has always been a competitor at heart and all his leisure activities reflect this interest; as well as Judo he ran and swam at country level and played baseball to town level.

Not one to do things by halves, no sooner had he mastered the technique of paddling in a straight line than he had become a Senior Instructor and was heavily involved with the Bury St. Edmonds Club as well as with the Suffolk Water Sports Association on whose behalf he took out youth groups to the Ouse and Wye. As his interest in slalom developed George found himself less and less involved with Bury St. Edmonds Club.

It was the sea and the surf round Felixstowe as well as the odd weir which enticed George away from the flat water and meeting with Bob Castle, the Sports Organiser for Suffolk Education was a natural progression. Bob was a leading light in slalom and had started the Suffolk Training Squad. Although George was too old to be a member of the Squad it was through them that he learnt about slalom.

Whitewater paddling in Suffolk is not quite as crazy as it sounds because of the sea. There is surf, not only at Bude and Hawaii but also at Felixstowe Ferry. Where the rivers Stour and Deben meet the sea and the tides most exciting white water is created making an ideal training ground for Liz and the other Suffolk Division One paddlers who paddled with her in those days.

George's interest veered away from that of SI towards coaching and he found that one cannot coach and be on the water at the same time. He also found that one cannot coach and be an active competitor, the two are not compatible.

A competitor has to be totally selfish while the coach must be unselfish, concentrating on those

he is working with, giving them his full attention, working for their success, for their place on that rostrum.

The early 1980s were the boom years for the Sporting Centres of Excellence and Liz joined Richard at the West Midland Centre of Excellence which was organised by John Court — an ex C1 International, with Ken Langford and Pauline Goodwin as coaches. George went with Liz to Stone and that coach supremo, Ken Langford taught him much. George picked Ken's brains, analysed what he had said and slotted it into his past experience with other sports.

George has been to many coaching courses, has talked with coaches from other sports as well as his own experience in Judo. And, looking back he cannot help wondering whether one reason why he did not do better at Judo was the fact that his coach spoke only Japanese! There was no one to motivate him, to tuck him under his wing and to care for his achievement.

As George performed there was no one to watch, to listen and to analyse his problems — psychology was not part of the scene.

Due to business commitments George has less time available now but is still giving three to four days a month to the National Team with a couple of evenings for the paper work, not to mention the 'holidays' spent with the team abroad at international events. After so many years of canoeing involvement he is beginning to dream of a holiday without a canoe to look at! And he is still very committed to coaching Liz, the paper work with her strategy, psychology and then the actual work out on the river and bank.

Liz and George are a Team — Liz up there on the rostrum with George something more than just a support and a prop looking on.

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competition. Richard Rox, on the other hand has worked alone a lot in his career and he was the first to use the isokinetic machine for power training.

THE PUSHERS — Len Smith

'I wish somebody would carry MY boat. Can't he carry it himself?

How often over a number of years have I heard such remarks - usually in friendly jest - occasionally with a hint of sarcasm. In a way such remarks helped me personally to keep my feet on the ground and not become the subject matter of this topic.

Both my son and daughter are canoeists and both have tackled the sport in their own way, seeking their water borne pleasure at their own desired levels.

How much have I 'pushed' them, I was recently asked by a well wishing 'dad' who explained he wanted his son to follow an established successful pattern (his words). Perhaps it was this that prompted me to write this article.

Quite categorically, I have never 'pushed' either of my offspring into anything - but I have given masses of encouragement. (There is a vast difference.) For example, I have no doubt that my daughter, who has a vigorous and somewhat aggressive approach to all her sports could be very successful in slalom but she doesn't rate canoe competition as her number one priority. It's her choice. I respect it.

My observations over a number of years lead me to the conclusion that youngsters who are pressured into sport rarely reach the heights and a few who do suffer strained, sometimes disastrous relationships with their parents.

What do I mean by 'pushing'? In my dictionary there are many forms which, in varying degrees, places an intolerable strain on young paddlers. In a word - pressure.

A few examples from the past season's slalom circuit:

Large father to very small son (10 yrs old): 'Christ. . . if you hadn't got that 50 you could have won.'

The father who left the slalom site to get it out of his system because he was angry at his son's 50.

'I'm not spending hundreds of pounds on new boats if you can't do better than that.' - heard at finish line.

'I've told you how to - now get in your boat and do it.'

'You'll never get into Div. 1 paddling like that.' (To 11 yr old in Div. 4)

'I make him train every day. He sometimes takes some getting out - once in his boat he's OK.' (12 yr old in November)

'When I was your age I was . . . champion of . . .'

On a different tack - the negative pushers . . . the parents who dump their kids at slalom sites on Friday to pick them up Sunday. Independence - yes. Encouragement - well, what do you think?

The parent who sits in a caravan 50m from the course and doesn't bother to watch their offspring perform. Negative pressure?

The line between pushing (pressure) and encouragement is a narrow one - not always easy to recognise and of course some paddlers react favourably to verbal encouragement. It's a matter of degree.

An example for another sport is Sebastian and Peter Coe, son/father who have developed a 'coaching' relationship and have not only been successful but have remained friends in the process.

Having pointed out a few (and thankfully the numbers are small) points of negative approach parents, it must be emphasised that there are many parents involved with their son/daughter in slalom who have probably got it about right and their parent/paddler style is reflected in results, and sound family relationships.

If I had to offer advice to parents of would be slalom champions, (and I would not be so presumptuous) it would probably follow these lines:

1. Encourage success - sympathise positively when there is failure - (There's always the next time.)
2. Take the trouble to train yourself. Why not a Slalom Trainer weekend? A number of parents in my own club have taken this route with benefits.
3. I believe athletes (paddlers) should be self motivating, but parents can provide the support for motivation both physically and mentally.
4. If your coaching talent is limited seek out a good coach and ask his advice. Always listen and act as you think fit. (You know your paddler best.)

5. I assume most children wish to please their parents - so if all goes wrong at a slalom, scolding, angry reaction or even indifference can be destructive to a considerable degree.

6. Success is not only achieved by winning.

There is no magic formula to suit everyone, but as a parent you do have a better insight into your paddler than others might have.

Finally, I believe that most young paddlers benefit from a personal manager (and most parents fit the bill admirably) to relive him/her of all tasks which however small may have effect on performance.

The manager sees that:

- Entries have been sent
- Arranges transport/accommodation
- Gets paddler and equipment to start on time (with correct numbers)
- Meets paddler at finish,

receives boat/equipment.
Has food/refreshments ready at right time.

Arrangements for training as above.

You may consider this being soft or pampering. Some paddlers may not even want/need it. I personally feel that it leaves the paddler free to concentrate on the job in hand.

The National teams/paddlers at World Champs have managers; boxers, footballers, ice skaters etc have them. Why not canoeists?

Finally, let's ask ourselves (parents that is) where do we fit in? Do we pressure - do we do too much or too little-where do we go from here?

There's a whole new season ahead.

In the words of Seb Coe's father:

'At 14 it was obvious I had a good one. At 16 I knew I had a world beater. But above all, PATIENCE WAS VITAL.'

Len Smith

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WHAT IS CURRENT TRENDS?

Most canoeists have heard of Current Trends Canoe Club by now. Quite a few know it is located close to the National Watersports Centre at Holme Pierrepont in Nottingham. Over one thousand canoeists have actually joined the club. Not many actually know what Current Trends does, and how it works. This article aims to fill in a few gaps in that knowledge.

It all started a few years ago when the Holme Pierrepont Slalom Course was being built. Frank Goodman, the owner of Valley Canoe Products, had played a major part in designing the course. He realised that although the Watersports Centre provided catering facilities for the canoeists, there was nowhere for paddlers to meet and socialise. He therefore obtained some land close to the Watersports Centre boundary and built a canoe club. Mike Devlin was employed as club manager, and as the club grew in size two other full time staff were taken on. Tracy Rooney to run the catering, and Simon Dawson to assist Mike with the canoeing.

The aim of the club is simple. It exists to provide a service to its members. Anybody can join, for a fee of one pound per year. Although most members are canoeists we also have rowers, windsurfers, joggers and walkers in the club, as well as many friends, parents and coaches of canoeists.

The services of the Club can be split into three parts. In these winter months Current Trends is thought of mainly as a cafe and clubhouse, serving anything from drinks and sweets to full meals, and a chance to warm up after a spell on the slalom or regatta course. We also offer free hot showers and free car parking to members.

The canoe showroom sells canoes and a fairly large range of accessories. With so many slalom kayak manufacturers in the area we tend to specialise in the recreational and plastic boat market. We do however sell a good selection of clothing and equipment suitable for slalom. One advantage of Current Trends is that canoes can be tested on the course before purchase, so you are sure you are buying the right boat.

The canoe school aims to offer a full range of courses for the paddler. Mike and Simon, with a few local associates, take on most of the basic instruction and the advanced white water touring. The teaching of competitive canoeing will depend on the level required. There are many top level paddlers living in the Nottingham area, quite a few of these are also good coaches who we can use to teach on our slalom coaching sessions.

After that quick description, the simplest thing is to give you a few examples of how members have used Current Trends in the past. It may give you a few ideas for the future.

- One member forgot to pack his helmet when travelling to Nottingham, by borrowing one from us he saved having to buy a new one. Another did not want to wreck his slalom boat on a surfing trip, and hired a plastic boat from us instead.
- One Div. 2 slalomist wanted a few hours of coaching. We were able to arrange six hours with a national squad level coach. Another Div. 4 canoeist received two hours learning the basics of training — warming up, repetition and rest rates, learning courses etc.
- A local coach wanted to organise a weekend training session. He based it at Current Trends using our schoolroom for lectures and video analysis.
- A canoe club secretary was tasked with planning a club weekend at Holme Pierrepont for almost 100 people. We laid on a "Club Dinner" on the Saturday evening, with videos after, and generally helped out by providing equipment. We could have taken the parents rafting on the course if required.

So now you know. Current Trends is simply a canoe club based at Nottingham whose aim is to help you with your canoeing. Anybody can join for only one pound per year. Check it out next time you are in town!



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ANDY RASPIN
Photo: Pete Astles

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JIM JAYES — UP TO HIS NECK IN IT
Photo: Pete Astles

..... LETTERS

Certainly the observers on the bank say the C2 was heading for open water when the plastic boat suddenly veered into its path. The Coach sent the C2 on their way in an attempt to defuse the situation but Mr. England and his friends appear to have a very entrenched point of view.

Surfing waves and sitting in stoppers is in no way less important than charging down a course but conversely, full length runs down the course are no less important to surfing waves, but you cannot sit on a wave for 5 minutes and expect everyone else to stop. By and large most people adhere to the unwritten rule of boats coming down the river have right of way, irrespective of construction. If everybody did this then there would be fewer problems. Different paddlers have varying priorities but some understanding of others needs is essential. Unfortunately, plastic boats seem to encourage some canoeists to paddle on water that is of a higher grade than their ability. (I no longer take my throw line as I am fed up with dragging plastic paddlers out of the water) It is these paddlers who are not in control of their boats who get in the way.

Whichever, if either, of these groups over reacted to the situation it is only one of many misunderstandings that have occurred here and is covered in this month's Editorial — Ed.

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed a clipping from the magazine "The Adventurers" (Vol. 1 No. 4) relating to dangers of rats' urine causing Leptospirosis (more commonly known as Weil's disease). Maybe the BCU and the organising body for water skiing, as well as other water users' organising bodies should persuade the medical profession that Weil's disease is a serious threat to water users, and that when a water user is concerned about the possibility of Weil's disease that more consideration is taken. (A copy of this article is sent to Geoff Good at BCU HQ).

RATS!

Following the death of a water skier in Warwickshire, doctors are warning of danger from rats' urine, found in rivers and lakes.

The urine carries a bacterium called Leptospira, common in rats and other animals, and needs to be treated immediately or fatal generalised infection with severe damage to heart and kidneys sets in.

Initial symptoms of leptospirosis are fever, headache, chills, malaise and muscle pains which doctors, not expecting the disease, sometimes simply diagnose as 'flu.

Even in the UK the disease is much more widespread than had been thought with 11% of farmworkers having antibodies to the organism, which shows they have suffered an infection in the previous two years.

The same is reported to be true of 1-2% of people who practise water sports. The danger may come from swallowing water or absorbing the infection through the membrane of the mouth or nose.

It is also recommended that any cuts or abrasions should be well covered. ■

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RESULTS

BANBURY DIV. 3 SLALOM HOLME PIERREPONT 17/18 September 1988

Banbury Canoe Club has always been strong in the junior slalom ranks and in their short history has had significant success in that area.

They continued this theme this year at their second Holme Div. 3 slalom by inviting two Junior World Champions to present the prizes.

Gareth Marriott (C1) and Brian Holden (C2) presented a splendid array of engraved glassware to the following:-

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| 1. J18 Paul Davies | Leeds |
| 2. J16 Matthew Sykes | Banbury |
| 3. J14 James Croft | Stevenage |

Teams K1M

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| 1. Shenton/Blake/Forbes | Langlebury |
| 2. Rawlinson/Withell/Campbell | |
| 3. Robinson/Edge | Scratch C |

This year Banbury were fortunate to enjoy good weather for their event which ran well to time throughout the weekend.

It also saw the introduction of the 1st Banbury Duck Race over a short course which it is hoped to extend next year.

Brian Fuller



SIMPSON/CORRIE/TIPPER
BRITISH OPEN CHAMPIONS
Photo: Pete Astles



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